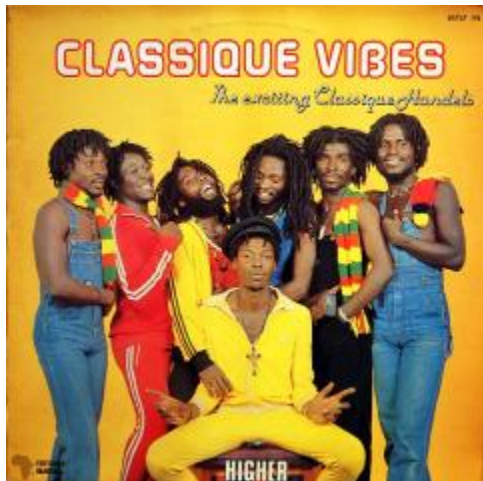


## MAKERS OF OUR MUSIC- NANA OSIBIO PREMPREH, A CONTEMPORARY OF KOJO ANTWI



The exploits of the Ghana Black Stars and the junior Teams in both African Nations Championship Tournaments and at the Olympics Games in addition to their surprise successes at the World Cup makes the nation a force to reckon with. But Ghana is not known for sports achievements only, the quality of performing arts is also something that needs attention. One of the most acceptable means of recreation in Ghana is the popular live dance band music which reached its apogee in the early 70-90s. The two decades saw the emergence and development of a music industry which was geared towards mobile entertainments all over the country. Boom Talents, Vis-A Vis, Sam Dance 8, Bindiga, Boulders, Black Beats, Heaven and Earth Band, B-So Yaya etc were some of the Live Dance Bands that rocked the nation. In those bands were some special musicians who had more than average

talents. They were the diligent stars of the day. Names such as Foster Lee, Sometimer, B.B. Boogaloo, Eric Bobo, Kojo Antwi, Captain Moro, Shelly Adoko, Bishop Okeley, Kao Kudi, Charley Pee, Bessa Simon, Steve Amos, Collins Woode, Oduro, Kojo Antwi came readily in mind. One of the top musicians whose exploits and memories is still fresh in the minds of followers of Ghana big band music history is NANA OSIBIO PREMPREH, a left handed man who played Bass guitar like nobody's business.

Our article today focus on this one of a kind music who distinguished himself in Ghana and continued to become a special arts ambassador of Ghana abroad.

In early 1970s, a good (late) friend of his taught him how to play keyboards. Within 3 months Nana Osibio started playing in a group.

Then, he picked the bass - or, better to say - the bass picked him!

Because nobody taught him how to play the bass. He just found himself picking up tunes on his own.

As time went by, he grew more and more involved with the bass.

"It was more like a spiritual relation," Nana Osibio recalls. "I had even built my own bass! You better ask, how did it look and sound! Yeah!"

However, in 1974, soon after he finished from high school, he joined a group called Capricon, as a keyboard player. This band was managed by Caprice Night Club in Accra. The salary he got was pretty good, but he was more interested in learning how to play the bass guitar. That was his beloved instrument. Well! One day, a friend of his who used to play drums, in one of the "big" bands in Ghana The Barbecues invited him to their concert.

Nana Osibio went and jammed on the bass, just to advertise himself. And that jam-session opened a new page in his musical life.

Nana Osibio stopped playing with the Capricon and joined another band, Alpha & Omega as the Bass player and started traveling around : He had the opportunity to travel internationally to the following African countries viz: Burkina Faso, Mali, Senegal, Gambia. These trips opened his eyes to the beauty of African landscapes and different ways of life, and it enriched his musical development.

Returning to Ghana, his blood was boiling with fresh inspiration. Alpha & Omega dissolved.

One year later, 1977, he and his friends formed the Classique Handels. The band which soon became the top in the country included Ghana's most famous love song musician Kojo Antwi then known as Julius Kwadjo Antwi on vocals. The band had the opportunity to travel outside but on their return to Ghana, had financial issues with the management so all the bandsmen which included Eric Bobo, I Shall Be and Kojo Antwi left and founded their own band, Classique Vibes. The band was awarded the "Best ECRAAG Band of the year in Ghana in 1978)

In 1980, Classique Vibes was invited, through the connections of Sam Adou, to come to travel to Europe. Well, that was yet another new chapter of Nana Osibios musical life - a kind of a big adventure, knowing what he was leaving behind, but not what was waiting ahead.

Classic Vibes performed on the Afro Festival in Copenhagen, and, never found their way back to Africa. Europe! 25 years, went just like that!

Each and everyday getting more and more involved with this path of music. Nana Osibio's experience here became one of getting to know and playing with different kinds of interesting musicians and bands, such as: Kwadjo Antwi band, Womack & Womack, Ahmadu Jarr & Highlife orchestra,

Tchandos band, Mutabaruka, Funky Fever, Emergency, Rikkie band, Wakilo, Roy Richards reggae band, Zebra band, Frafra band, Albert campos band, Afro Moses band, Ministry of Harmony, Continental Heat, and so on and so forth.

"Looking back now, I see it has all been an experience of learning and learning ... thats what my music is all about," Nana Osibio concludes. "

All these fellow musicians deserve my hearty love, appreciation and respect!"

Yet, the origins and background to where he came from remains to be the roots of the tree of his music; back to his local church in Ghana - the songs and ecstasy of African spirit. Thats what gave blood and pulse to the sound of his funky-bass and all his present compositions, which he is proud

to call "AWOSO MUSIC".

Currently, Nana Osibio has formed his own band, "ASAFO".

Source:

Story from Modern Ghana News:

<http://www.modernghana.com/blogs/426638/31/makers-of-our-music-nana-osibio-premreh-a-contemp.html>

Published: Monday, October 29, 2012

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